

initiative that comes forward to protect our children will receive this bipartisan cooperation that we have achieved in the House Judiciary Committee.

I ask my colleagues to vote for the legislation of Mr. PORTER.

I yield back my time.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is not even close to the outer parameters of the Constitution. What it does is it allows the sharing of fingerprint data identification that has all been constitutionally collected with school districts who are hiring new personnel to find out if they have something in their background that would disqualify them from a job working with children. And that is all there is to it.

The fingerprints were valid. It is merely sharing the fingerprints with somebody who has got a legitimate use for them.

Now, there are criminal penalties involved for those who use those fingerprints for other than verifying somebody who is applying for a job at a school or volunteering there, for any other purpose whatsoever.

What has been said in the debate, using the Michigan cases and the two California cases, shows that there are loopholes in the present system that allow people who wish to molest children to get jobs undetected of their past record. And what the gentleman from Nevada is doing is making sure that those people are identified before they can wreck another young life.

What's wrong with that? This doesn't need perfection. It is simple; it is straightforward. And it ought to pass.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4894, the School Safety Acquiring Faculty Excellence Act, a measure to provide school districts with the ability to ensure the safety of their classrooms.

I thank Mr. PORTER for leading the charge in making certain that children in our schools are learning in the safest environment possible. America's teachers are at the very heart of our education system and play a vital role in the lives of children. Their daily one-on-one interaction with the children in their classrooms cannot easily be matched.

It is for those reasons that we want to be certain that our teachers are of no threat to our children. The School Safety Acquiring Faculty Excellence Act is a logical and realistic approach to providing school administrators the tools necessary to help ensure their schools are safe.

Mr. Speaker, teachers deserve our utmost appreciation for their service and lifelong dedication to education. It is through this legislation, however, that we also address the realities of today and provide reassurance that we are keeping predators out of our classrooms. The safety and protection of our schoolchildren is imperative.

Again, I would like to thank Mr. PORTER for his continued efforts to help guarantee the safety of our schools, and I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4894, to provide for certain

access to national crime information databases by schools and educational agencies for employment purposes, with respect to individuals who work with children. Our children are America's future. It is important that they receive the best education we can offer them. It is also important that they be placed in a safe learning environment. Furthermore, local government has an obligation to provide for the safety and security of students. We help ensure that America's children learn without being put at risk by allowing local, territorial and state educational agencies to access national crime information databases.

Teachers play a prominent role in the lives of children and in the shaping of their character. This bill gives public and private schools the tools they need to ensure that the teachers they hire uphold the highest standards of conduct while educating our children. I support H.R. 4894 because it will help keep America's children safe inside the classroom.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FEENEY). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4894.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

EXEMPTING PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES FROM SECTION 8 RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROHIBITION

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill H.R. 5117, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 5117

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXEMPTION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES FROM SECTION 8 RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROHIBITION.

Subsection (a) of section 327 of Public Law 109-115 (119 Stat. 2466) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (5), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) by redesignating paragraph (6) as paragraph (7); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (5) the following new paragraph:

“(6) is not a person with disabilities, as such term is defined in section 3(b)(3)(E) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437a(b)(3)(E)) and was not receiving assistance under such section 8 as of November 30, 2005; and”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. PRYCE) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio.

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume. The story of this bill begins 4 months ago when I first heard that disabled students, many of whom rely on section 8 housing assistance, were at risk of losing support they depend on to go to school in and around Columbus, Ohio.

Marilyn Frank, the executive director of Creative Living, an organization in Columbus that provides a home for the severely disabled, told me that she feared a new law aimed at eliminating abuses in the section 8 program had the potential to hurt some of our most vulnerable citizens. Many of these residents would be unable to pursue their dreams of higher education without the support of Creative Living and the funding of the section 8 program.

H.R. 5117 gives us the opportunity to right a wrong. We can give these students the peace of mind that they can continue their education without fear that they will lose the housing on which they depend.

Now, the story behind the story begins more than a year ago. Media reports in Iowa and elsewhere questioned the integrity of section 8. It became clear that students, some student athletes, many from well-to-do families, were residing in subsidized housing created for low-income Americans. The images from these reports were patently offensive. While some families struggled to make financial ends meet to stay in the section 8 residences, a group of college football players lived in low-income housing, rent free and spent their \$500 per week stipend at the mall on video games.

Congress responded quickly to close these loopholes and tightened the eligibility requirements for students who wish to reside in federally subsidized housing.

Unfortunately, that fix overlooked the disabled. This bill simply exempts disabled students who were receiving section 8 from these new requirements, thus grandfathering in disabled students who are currently going to school and receiving this assistance. The list of exempt individuals also currently includes veterans, married individuals, and those with dependent children.

The bill we are considering today ensures that disabled students who desperately are dependent upon section 8 to pursue their education will not be unfairly shut out of the rental assistance program.

I would like to thank my fellow Ohioans, Chairman OXLEY and Congressman NEY, Chairman HOBSON and Congressman TIBERI, for helping move this bill quickly to the floor. Mr. LEACH and Ranking Member FRANK from Massachusetts also deserve a great deal of thanks.

But our fight is not done. Unfortunately, because of some CBO scoring issues, the bill before us today is not

the broad fix to the section 8 program I had originally sought. And subsidized housing facilities like Creative Living cannot accept new students under the section 8 program until a more permanent solution is enacted by this body.

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To that end I will continue to work to ensure that facilities like this can continue to house students with disabilities in the future and allow them to pursue their dreams.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to thank the gentlewoman from Ohio, Ms. PRYCE; the gentlemen from Ohio, Mr. TIBERI and Mr. HOBSON; and the distinguished chairman of the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity, from Ohio, Mr. NEY; as well as the ranking member, Mr. BARNEY FRANK; and Chairman OXLEY for their work on this measure. The full Committee on Financial Services reported it out unanimously by voice vote on May 24 of this year. As indicated by my colleague Ms. PRYCE, this bill corrects an unintended consequence of a provision added to the HUD appropriations bill last year that sought to close a loophole in the Section 8 program allowing student athletes and other non-needy students access to subsidized housing.

The fiscal year 2006 Transportation, Treasury, HUD, Judiciary and D.C. Appropriations conference report, codified as Public Law 109-115, included a provision that effectively counted the income of parents when determining whether students under the age of 24 are eligible to receive Section 8 assistance. That provision does not apply to veterans or to students who are married or have children. This bill, H.R. 5117, would additionally exempt students with disabilities from this treatment.

Mr. Speaker, the same appropriations bill included language intended to close the loophole in the Section 8 program which allowed student athletes and other non-needy students access to Section 8 housing intended for low-income persons. While this was not the intention of the appropriators, it created a potential hardship for the disabled community. However, the final rule issued by HUD in response to Public Law 109-115 has the potential to disqualify from Section 8 eligibility those severely disabled individuals under the age of 24 who are enrolled in an institution of higher learning.

H.R. 5117 is prescriptive, Mr. Speaker. It merely adds persons with disabilities to the list of exempt individuals. Of course, the disabled can least afford additional burdens and, therefore, anything that we can do to lessen their burden is well worth it. The final rule issued by HUD included this prohibition, and the sooner it is lifted, we will be able to return a sense of fairness to

the Section 8 program, particularly where disabled students are concerned.

So I would urge my colleagues to support the passage of H.R. 5117.

And let me just say that this bill is typical of the kind of work that is getting done on our committee. We have tremendous cooperation from both sides of the aisle to do good work relative to making sure that not only rental opportunities are available to those who need it, but we are doing wonderful work in this committee on home ownership issues. What better month to be able to correct this problem in law than the month of June. This is National home ownership Month, and I think that our committee has certainly recognized this. And while we make this correction, we are working on a lot of other bills.

I am so proud of the work that we are all doing on FHA to bring it up to date and make sure that our opportunities are available for the least of these. I am so proud of the work that we are going to mark up on voucher reform. I am very pleased about the idea that many of us are getting together to try to hold on to HOPE VI.

So in this National home ownership Month, today we stand to send a signal not only to the disabled but to those who somehow get overlooked, forgotten, that we really are on point.

Mr. Speaker, again, let me just thank my colleagues on the committee on both sides of the aisle for the work that we are doing. I thank them today for 5117, for all of the other work that we are doing, and I would say that many others in this House can look at the work that this committee is producing and be proud and perhaps even use it as an example.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I urge passage at this time.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I just want to say this is a great victory today. We are ensuring that these students do not have to put away their textbooks or even hang up their lab coats because of something that we did when we thought we were correcting a problem. There are enough challenges put in front of individuals with severe disabilities, and worrying about a place to call home while they attend college should not be one of them.

I also appreciate the bipartisan effort on this bill and so many other pieces of legislation that moved through our committee.

And thank you, Ms. WATERS, for joining me in this effort.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. PRYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5117, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof)

the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on this legislation and insert extraneous material thereon.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INTERSTATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 372) recognizing the 50th Anniversary of the Interstate Highway System.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 372

Whereas on June 29, 1956, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956 to establish a 41,000-mile National System of Interstate and Defense Highways, known as the "Interstate Highway System", and the Highway Revenue Act of 1956 to create a Highway Trust Fund;

Whereas in 1990, the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways was renamed the "Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense Highways" to recognize President Eisenhower's role in the creation of the system;

Whereas in 2006, this web of superhighways, now spanning a total of 46,876 miles throughout the United States, has had a powerful and positive impact on our national life;

Whereas the Interstate Highway System has proven vital in transporting people and goods from one region to another speedily and safely;

Whereas the Interstate Highway System has facilitated trade both within our national borders and globally and helped create unprecedented economic expansion and opportunities for millions of Americans;

Whereas the Interstate Highway System has brought diverse communities throughout our land closer together and kept us connected to one another as well as the larger world;

Whereas the Interstate Highway System has made it easier and often more enjoyable to travel to long-distance destinations and spend time with family members and friends who live far away;

Whereas the Interstate Highway System is a pivotal component in our national system of defense and emergency preparedness efforts;

Whereas the Interstate Highway System remains one of our country's paramount assets as well as a symbol of human ingenuity and freedom; and

Whereas this anniversary provides an occasion to both honor one of the largest public works achievements of all time and reflect on how it can remain effective in the years ahead: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—

(1) recognizes the golden anniversary year of the Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense Highways;

(2) recognizes the achievements of the Federal Highway Administration (and its predecessor,